

about such a common bird as the European Redshank or Pool-snipe. There is also no inherent improbability of the alleged occurrence at Hudson Bay of so wide-ranging a species, but quite the reverse; the probability is entirely in favor of the case as alleged. Under the circumstances the proper place for the bird would seem to be our Hypothetical List; and as a candidate for that position its claims are quite as good as those of various birds which have already found rest there. I would therefore propose the following addition, *ex hypothesi*, to the Check-List, p. 326:

11.2. *Totanus totanus* (LINN.).

Common Redshank.

Scolopax totanus LINN. Syst. Nat. I, 1758, p. 145.

Totanus totanus——

GEOG. DIST.—Europe, Asia, and Africa. Described as North American from a specimen said to have been taken on Hudson Bay and transmitted to the British Museum (Sw. and Rich., Fn. Bor.-Am. II, 1831, p. 391).

I have only to add that this record is clear of all confusion with the case of the "White Redshank from Hudson's Bay" figured by Edwards, pl. 139, and by him considered as an albino. But if this be admitted in evidence, it supports the case now presented.—ELLIOTT COUES, *Washington, D. C.*

The Avocet (*Recurvirostra americana*) at Ipswich, Mass.—I take pleasure in reporting the capture of three American Avocets, on Sept. 13, 1896, at Ipswich Neck, Ipswich, Mass., by Mr. A. B. Clark of Peabody, Mass. The birds were brought into the taxidermist establishment of Mr. L. W. Newell in Boston, where I saw them, and where I at last found out about their capture. There were but three birds in the bunch. They were not sexed when skinned.—FRED. H. KENNARD, *Brookline, Mass.*

The 1896 Migration of *Charadrius dominicus* and *Numenius borealis* in Massachusetts.—The prevailing winds on Nantucket Island during the greater portion of the migrating period was as follows: August 13, east and southwest; 14, east; 15, northeast; 16, southwest; 17, northwest; 18, west; 19 and 20, north; 21, 22, and 23, south; 24, southwest; 25, east; 26, southeast; 27, north; 28 and 29, southeast; 30, southwest; 31, southwest, with squall from the north in late p. m.; Sept. 1, north by west. There was no severe blow or storm during this period.

On August 22, at night, a few Golden Plovers were heard passing over Tuckernuck Island, where on the 28th the first one of the season was shot. Five were also seen on this same date at the eastern part of Nantucket. On the 31st sixteen Plovers arrived in a certain preserved field on the Kimball farm, where in a short time their number was somewhat augmented, at which time some were shot. When I visited the remainder, a little later in September, I counted twenty-two, the greater part of

which were young birds. They seemed at home and at ease in the field. As I walked towards them at a distance they stood erect and moved about; after I disappeared from their view all but two or three of them squatted with their breasts resting on the ground.

On August 31, I drove pretty much all over the Plover ground on Nantucket without seeing a bird. There was a gentle southwest air in the morning, with a squall accompanied with rain late in the afternoon — about five o'clock. Early in the evening I was told that a flock of Plovers had been seen coming in towards the north shore of Nantucket from the Sound, and still later I was again informed of several other flocks being heard, for it was now about 7.30 o'clock, dark, and raining moderately, accompanied with but little wind.

It would seem that birds of various kinds commenced to seek land at about this time, for considerable numbers were soon heard calling as they flew around the electric lights located at the tops of the high poles in various parts of the town. This calling was nearly continuous up to one o'clock, midnight, and I have only two or three times before heard such prolonged and continual calling of the birds. They were apparently bewildered, and seemed to pass around a certain light for awhile, and then pass to another, later coming back to the first one. I therefore think we heard the same birds over and over again. In order to substantiate this I made inquiry the next day of some of the life-saving crews located at different parts of the island, as also of others, but none of them had heard of any birds, and they were all apparently in a restricted area over the town. While no birds were seen *distinctly*, many of the call notes were recognized by others and by me, those of the Greater Yellow-legs (*Totanus melanoleucus*) predominating. There were also the Smaller Yellow-leg (*Totanus flavipes*), Golden Plovers (*Charadrius dominicus*), Hudsonian Curlews (*Numenius hudsonicus*) (heard only twice), Black-bellied Plovers (*Squatarola squatarola*), Terns and Peeps. Several of the sportsmen told me they heard the notes of the Eskimo Curlew (*Numenius borealis*). I am inclined to the opinion that they must have been mistaken, inasmuch as I was up until half past eleven o'clock P. M. and did not hear any of them. It was with the liveliest anticipations for the next day's shooting that I retired for the night. I arose at three o'clock A. M., and my disappointment can be imagined better than told when on looking out I found that the weather had cleared, the stars were shining and the little air that was moving was from the *north*. Although hopeless, I was driving over the western Plover ground at daylight, hoping I might find a few tired birds. Seeing absolutely no birds in this quarter up to eight o'clock, I picked up my decoys and drove eastward where I remained until 1.30 P. M. and then returned home without having seen a bird. On the way I saw a number of sportsmen, none of whom, I learned on inquiry, had seen anything. *All* the birds had passed on without stopping. This was the first defined migratory movement this season of birds going southward.

On Sept. 3, at night, some Plovers were heard as they passed over the town. On Sept. 9 a severe storm prevailed, wind east-northeast with heavy rain. On the 10th it was still storming with wind southeast, also raining very hard during the first half of the day, but clearing about noon. No birds were noted, nor did any land, so far as I know. On Sept. 13 and 14 still another very severe storm prevailed at sea. On the morning of the 16th I visited a number of the principal game stalls in Faneuil Hall market, Boston, Mass. In all of them were six Golden Plovers, one of which was a young bird.

No Eskimo Curlews have been received in the market from this coast this season, as far as I can learn, nor have I seen or know of one being authentically noted this season.

A number of *young* blue-legged Jack Curlew (*N. hudsonicus*) landed in Massachusetts during this storm, and a number were taken. I saw about thirty in the market and about a dozen were shot in Nantucket. During the storm high easterly gales prevailed along the southern New England coast on the 13th, the maximum wind velocity being 52 miles at Block Island, 33 miles at Boston, and 26 miles at Nantucket. This storm came from the sea, giving no previous warning. No Plovers or Eskimo Curlews could have been passing at the time, as otherwise they would have been forced to seek land for shelter from the elements.

Personally I have taken but four Golden Plovers this season, two of which were young birds. In addition to these perhaps one dozen more may have been shot on Nantucket and Tuckernuck Islands. On the north shore of Massachusetts, at Ipswich, one of the principal sportsmen there informed me he had seen and taken only one Golden Plover. There was no landing of Plover or Eskimo Curlews in that vicinity this season. He thought he saw four Eskimo Curlews very high up in the air flying on migration.

Some of the large game dealers in Boston, Mass., received *as usual* the past spring and summer, considerable numbers of these birds which had been taken in the Mississippi Valley while on their northern migration to their *breeding grounds*. Among them were large numbers of the Bartramian Sandpipers, which bird is already scarce as a resident on the New England coast. Are we not approaching the beginning of the end? —GEORGE H. MACKAY, *Nantucket, Mass.*

Validity of the Genus *Lophortyx*. — It is well-known that in the Gallinæ the number of tail-feathers is a good clue to the genera. Excepting when very numerous — 20 to 32 — they are quite constant in the genera usually recognized, such a case as that of *Coturnix*, in which the rectrices are 10 or 12, being quite unusual. Our Grouse, for example, are well marked in this respect, though some have as many as 20 rectrices, and are not free from some individual variation in the numbers. In the Odontophorinæ, a compact group of *Perdicidæ*, peculiar to America, the rectrices are invariably 12, except in the recently separated genus *Rhynchortyx*, which